

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 3 with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Referring now to Figs. 7a and 7b, there is illustrated a method for locating the micro discrete indicia 15 on the surface of the gemstone 20. For each producer of gemstones a unique set of the coordinates (x_1, y_1) for the location of the micro discrete indicia 15 can be specified. Using these coordinates the producer's unique micro discrete indicia 15 can be located from a designated feature 128 such as a facet whose location is (x_0, y_0) or if polar coordinates are used is (r_0, θ_0) . In another embodiment the coordinates (x_1, y_1) or (r_1, θ_1) for the location of the micro discrete indicia 15 or can be specified on a document of authenticity (not shown), which can accompany each gemstone 20. The location (x_1, y_1) or (r_1, θ_1) of the indicia 15 can be given from the designated feature 128 such as a facet whose location is (x_0, y_0) or if polar coordinates are used is (r_0, θ_0) . In yet another embodiment of the present invention, the indicia 15 can be located by repeatedly forming the indicia 15 using the near-field apparatus 10 creating a set of indicia 125. The set of indicia 125 forms a mark having a length "l" and height "s", which is visible through a normal optical microscope (not shown) and can be located using the normal optical microscope and/or eye-loop. The length "l" and height "s" can be of a range of between .02 millimeters to .1 millimeter depending on the magnification of the viewing microscope or viewing eye loop used. After the set of indicia 125 has been located, the near-field optical apparatus 200 (described in Fig. 8) is used to read the individual micro discrete indicia 15, which by itself is not readable unless view through the near-field apparatus 200--.